

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Improving Our Infrastructure: Three Examples



BEFORE

Damaged or uneven sidewalks are challenging for all pedestrians, particularly our young, elderly and disabled citizens.



AFTER

Level sidewalks ensure that all Seattle pedestrians can easily access their homes and businesses.



BEFORE

Fading and eroding pavement signs are confusing and potentially dangerous for drivers.



AFTER

Clearly defined pavement signs are visible to drivers day and night, ensuring smooth and safe traffic flow.



BEFORE

Cracked pavement and potholes make for rough driving that can damage cars, restrict trucks and injure bicyclists. Worn out roads tend to further deteriorate faster than those in good shape.



AFTER

Smooth pavement lets drivers focus on their driving instead of avoiding potholes. They're safer, more comfortable and better able to handle a mix of vehicles and bicycle traffic.

YOU ARE PART OF THE SOLUTION

“The need is clear, not only for the routine work of paving streets but the bigger projects such as our aging bridges. This funding gap presents both a challenge and an opportunity for our city.”

— Mayor Gregory J. Nickels

➤ **Seattle’s transportation system** touches us every day, whether we are walking on sidewalks, driving on roads or pedaling along bike trails. Yet it’s easy to overlook its importance to our day-to-day lives.

Even though Seattle’s transportation system continues to function, key pieces of its infrastructure are close to failing. For example, every day, hundreds of thousands of people cross the 149 bridges that connect our city. Most of those bridges were built to last 60 years. Today, the average age of Seattle’s bridges is 55 years. If the maintenance backlog continues as is, these aging bridges will not be replaced for another 110 years.

Our transportation system is at a critical juncture. If we want a first rate transportation system — one that provides easy connections to neighborhoods, downtown and the region; that improves public safety, neighborhood livability and property values; that generates jobs; and that supports economic growth — we must act now.

The longer we wait to act, the more it will cost us — both in dollars and in time.

FAST FACT

Seattle’s 38 neighborhood plans have identified more than \$500 million in transportation improvements. Only a portion of these projects have received funding.

Contact us:

To learn more and give us your input, visit www.seattle.gov/transportation or call (206) 684-ROAD.

At the crossroads

Let’s Keep Seattle MOVING



Mayor Gregory J. Nickels

“Our success as a world class city depends on our ability to keep people, goods and services moving.”

➤ **Seattle’s transportation system is a public asset.**

Every day, hundreds of thousands of us drive along Seattle streets, walk on sidewalks, cross bridges, obey traffic signals and enjoy bike paths. These basic elements of Seattle’s vast transportation infrastructure create a complex yet coordinated network of roads, sidewalks, bridges and traffic controls that keeps Seattle moving.

A healthy transportation system benefits all of Seattle. It allows us to easily get to the places we live, work and play; improves public safety, neighborhood livability and property values; creates jobs; and supports economic growth.

Our transportation infrastructure was not built to last forever. Not surprisingly, time and extensive use have taken their toll. To assure that our transportation system continues to meet our needs, we must preserve and repair — and expand — the existing infrastructure to keep it safely and effectively moving people, goods and services.

Seattle cannot continue to build a first rate city on a second rate transportation system.

FAST FACT

State court decisions and voter approved initiatives in recent years have resulted in the City losing nearly \$25 million a year in transportation funding.

BUMPY ROAD AHEAD

Average Useful Life vs. Current Replacement Cycle

TYPE OF INFRASTRUCTURE	QUANTITY	AVERAGE USEFUL LIFE	AVERAGE REPLACEMENT CYCLE	PERCENT IN POOR CONDITION
Bridges	149	60 years	165 years	37%
Stairways	482	20 to 45 years	120 years	22%
Retaining Walls	587	20 to 40 years	300 years	19%
Arterial Streets	1,542 lane miles	12 to 40 years	40 to 200 years	16%
Sidewalks	490 miles	12 to 80 years	40 to 200 years	30%

A Growing Transportation Crisis

➤ **Every neighborhood**, business district and industrial area has been impacted by the reduction in transportation funding.

A TROUBLED SYSTEM



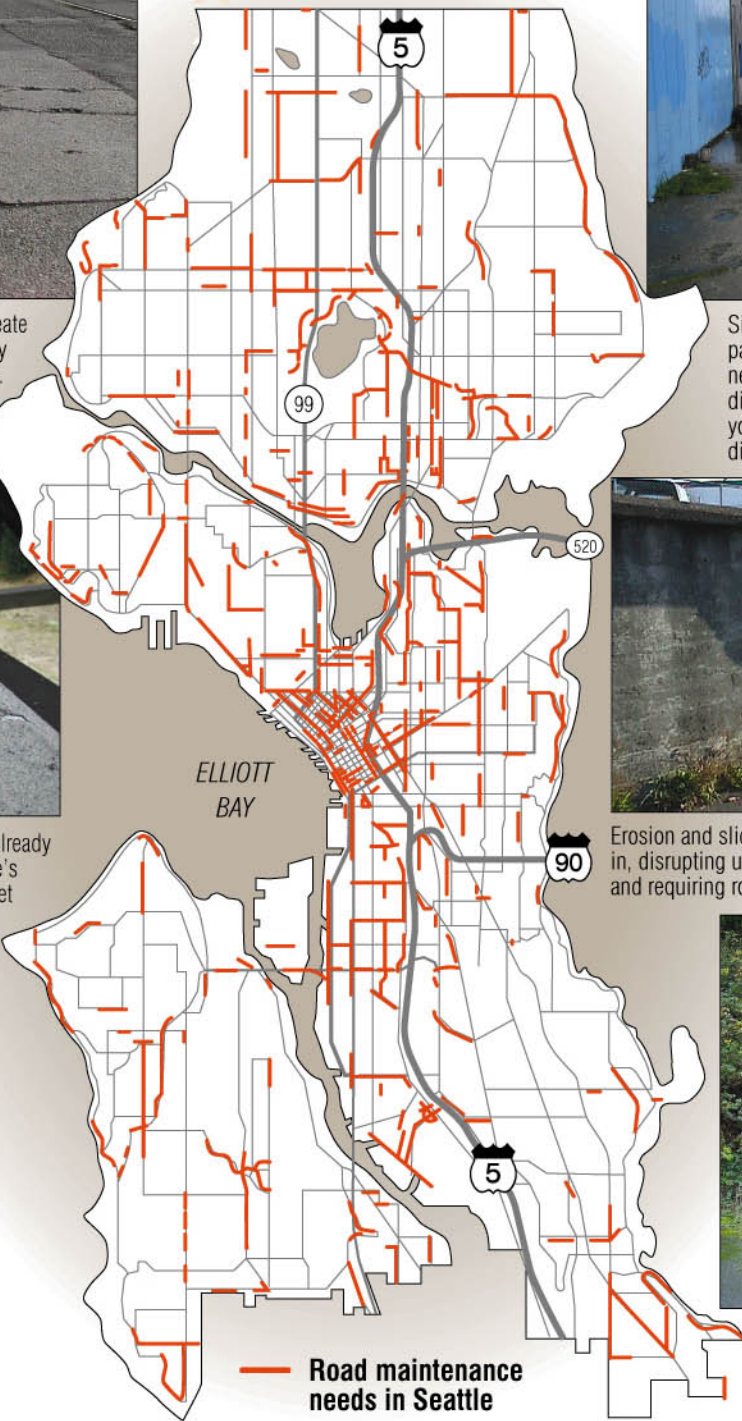
Unightly cracked concrete, ruts and potholes create unsafe driving conditions, damage vehicles, delay traffic flow and pose a major hazard for bicyclists.



Crumbling supports and worn-out bridge decks already have required load restrictions on some of Seattle's most heavily used bridges. Many still do not meet today's seismic safety standards.



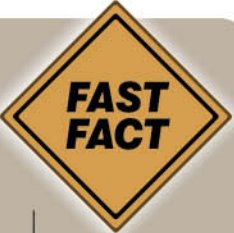
The effects of weather, wear and tear make navigating city streets confusing and difficult.



— Road maintenance needs in Seattle

The City's highest transportation priority is to preserve and manage an \$8 billion transportation infrastructure that includes:

4,000 lane miles of pavement	1,000 signalized intersections	120,000 signs
2,000 miles of sidewalks	120 miles of bike routes & trails	800 traffic circles
149 bridges	4,700 crosswalks	30,000 street trees
22 miles of retaining walls	482 stairways	



Sidewalks with cracks and uneven pavement make walking Seattle's neighborhoods and business districts difficult for everyone, especially the young, the elderly and people with disabilities.



Erosion and slides can cause retaining walls to cave in, disrupting utilities, damaging personal property and requiring road closures and restrictions.



Many of Seattle's older stairways are steep, narrow, uneven and unwelcoming — posing a major safety concern for those who use them.

“The backlog is real. Now is the time to attempt to make a difference.”

— **Darryl Smith**,
2004 Citizens Transportation
Advisory Committee

The Challenge is Funding

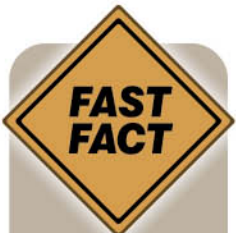


A crew installs concrete panels on Lake City Way NE

➤ **While transportation funding** has eroded, so have critical parts of our transportation infrastructure. Seattle currently faces a maintenance backlog of more than \$500 million. Potholes interrupt roadways, bridge decks are crumbling and many facilities don't meet seismic safety standards. If funding resources for transportation remain the same, the accumulating backlog will double by 2020.

In the last decade, funding dedicated to transportation has declined significantly — by nearly \$25 million annually. This shortfall has impacted our entire city. Seattle has fallen dangerously behind in maintaining city streets, bridges, traffic controls and pedestrian and bike facilities.

At the same time, the demand on Seattle's transportation system continues to grow as our population increases and our city expands its economic, cultural and regional importance. Our lifestyles and economy require a highly functioning, well-connected system of transportation facilities that ensure vitality and mobility for neighborhoods, business investment and future development.



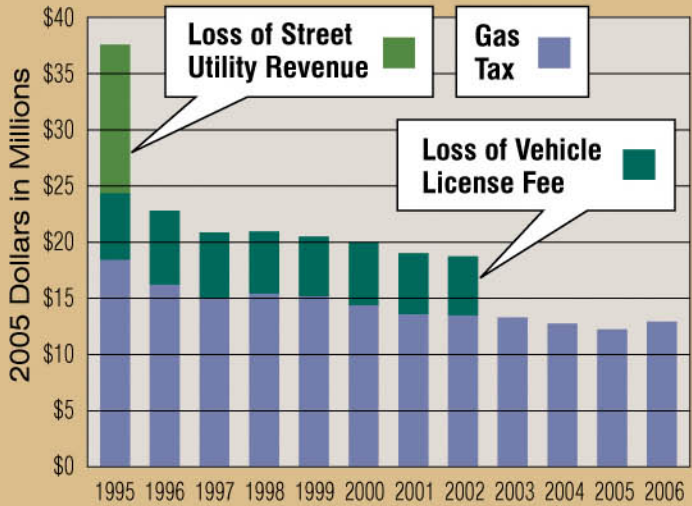
By 2024, more than 80,000 more people will be living within Seattle's city limits.

HOW WE GOT HERE

Declining Investment & Increasing Demand

■ In the last ten years, the City of Seattle had to increase General Fund spending on transportation by **more than 200 percent**. Still, the maintenance backlog continues to grow. The solution is an injection of funding dedicated to transportation improvements.

Reduced Dedicated Transportation Funding



Seattle Population

